

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 11, 2010

SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO HOLD HEARINGS ON PROPOSED CODE OF EVIDENCE

The Illinois Supreme Court Special Committee on Illinois Evidence has scheduled hearings in Chicago and Springfield next week on a proposed Illinois Code of Evidence.

The hearing in Chicago will be held Tuesday, May 18 at 160 N. LaSalle Street, Room C-500. It is scheduled to get underway at 10 a.m.

The hearing in Springfield is scheduled for Thursday, May 20, 2010 at the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, 3101 Old Jacksonville Road. It also will begin at 10 a.m.

Notice of the hearings and the proposed code was earlier posted on the Supreme Court website at www.state.il.us/court. To view the proposals, scroll down on the Home page to "Legal Community" on the left side of the screen and click on "Special Supreme Court Committee on Illinois Evidence Public Hearings."

Anyone wishing to be scheduled to testify should contact the Committee through the Administrative Office at 222 N. LaSalle Street in Chicago.

The Supreme Court created the Committee upon the recommendation of Chief Justice Thomas R. Fitzgerald on November 24, 2008. The Court charged the committee with codifying the law of evidence in the state of Illinois.

Currently, the state's rules on evidence are embedded in the common law, Illinois statutes and Illinois Supreme Court decisions. The Committee, which has met regularly under the chairmanship of Appellate Judge Donald C. Hudson of St. Charles in the Second Judicial District, has compiled a 79-page proposal. The proposal uses the same titles and numerical sequences as the Federal Rules of Evidence to facilitate comparison to the Federal Rules; but the proposed Illinois code is written to reflect solely Illinois law.

"The charge to the Committee was to codify the law of evidence in the State of Illinois," said Judge Hudson. "There is a critical benefit in having the basic rules of evidence codified in one authoritative source. It will substantially improve the efficiency of the trial process for the litigants and the judiciary."

MORE

Committee to Hold Public Hearing Add One

A final version of the proposed rules must be approved by the Supreme Court before they take effect.

In addition to Appellate Judge Hudson, members of the Committee are: Appellate Judges Robert L. Carter of the Third Judicial District in Ottawa and Nathaniel R. Howse Jr. of the First Judicial District in Cook County; State Sen. Arthur J. Wilhelmi, D-Springfield, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee; and State Rep. Tom Cross, House Republican Leader from Plainfield; Circuit Court Judge Heidi Ladd of the Sixth Judicial Circuit in Champaign; and Associate Judge Dennis J. Porter of the Circuit Court of Cook County.

Serving as advisor to the Committee is Michael Graham, Professor of Law at the University of Miami School of Law.

Other members are attorneys Gino L. DiVito, retired appellate judge now of Tabet, DiVito & Rothstein, LLC, Chicago; Eileen Letts of Greene and Letts, Chicago; Shannon M. McNulty of the Clifford Law Offices, Chicago; Robert Neiryneck of Costigan & Wollrab PC Bloomington; Michael Scodro, solicitor general in the Illinois Attorney General's office; Todd Smith of Power Rogers & Smith, Chicago; Brian K. Trentman, public defender of Washington County; Michael J. Warner, Michael J. Warner & Associates.

Other members are Warren D. Wolfson, dean of the DePaul University College of Law and former appellate judge; and Ralph Ruebner, who serves as reporter for the committee, and is associate dean for academic affairs and professor at The John Marshall Law School.

Chief Justice Fitzgerald serves as Supreme Court liaison to the Committee.

Marcia M. Meis serves as liaison for the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts under Director Cynthia Y. Cobbs.

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(FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Joseph Tybor, press secretary to the Illinois Supreme Court, at 312.793.2323)